

## MINUTES

### **DUTCHESS COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION Tourism Committee**

**Thursday, January 21, 2010, 8:30 a.m.  
EDC Conference Room  
3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Present:** J. Bisel, A. Cross, S. DeKrey, D. DiNapoli, D. Garry, R. Grems, K. Hansen, E. Hayes, L. Hubbard, B. Krevolin, C. Laube, G. Mure, B. Pagano, L. Pensiero, J. Reynolds

**Absent:** J. D'Alessandro, P. Feder, M. Kangas, A. Meagher, C. North, S. Rector, S. Turk

**Staff Present:** M. K. Vrba, J. MacEnroe, L. Higginson, D. Hopper, F. Lauricella, N. Lutz, M. Wright

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#### **Welcome,** Director, Mary Kay Vrba

The regular meeting of the Tourism Committee was called to order by Mary Kay Vrba, Director, 8:30 a.m. The minutes of the November 19, 2009, Tourism Committee meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Bob Grems, duly seconded by Karen Hansen, and unanimously accepted. Mary Kay introduced and welcomed two new members to the Tourism Committee, Diane DiNapoli, co-owner of the Journey Inn Bed & Breakfast in Hyde Park, and Cliff Laube, Public Affairs Specialists for the FDR Presidential Library and Museum.

**Special Presentation:** A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Mary Kay Vrba from Tara Sullivan, Executive Director of the Quadricentennial Celebration, from Governor Paterson's office "In grateful recognition of your active participation in the New York State Quadricentennial Commemoration." . . . "We are extremely proud of your efforts to promote an understanding of history and a sense of place, which will continue to cultivate a reverence for the part, to embrace the present, and to preserve our exciting future, as we move forward. Please accept our heartfelt thanks for the ingenuity and energy you so graciously gave to the Hudson-Fulton-Champlain Quadricentennial. Whether at Harbor Night or River Day, at the Stamp Expo or the Walkway Opening, from Lake Champlain to Governor's Island, or any of the thousands of local festivities, you became a living part of our communal history. On behalf of all New Yorkers, we commend your exceptional efforts to salute and to share in this extraordinary milestone year – a once-in-a-lifetime experience we will all long remember and always treasure." Tara distributed Quadricentennial flags to the committee for keepsakes.

#### **Director's Report,** Mary Kay Vrba

- **Ad Agency, BBG&G Advertising:** Mary Kay welcomed Deborah Garry and June Bisel from BBG&G Advertising, the ad agency chosen from four agencies to work with Dutchess County Tourism. Looking forward to new tag lines, a new logo, and advertising ideas.
- **Budget 2010:**
  - **Tourism Action Day:** Scheduled for Tuesday, March 2, 2010, in Albany, sponsored by Tourism Industry Coalition of New York State. All committee members were invited to attend to meet and talk with our New York State Legislators to support tourism budget and bedtax. Sign up with Mary Wright if you would like to attend ([dctpa@dutchesstourism.com](mailto:dctpa@dutchesstourism.com)) or call 845/463-4000. John MacEnroe suggested having a strategy session pre-Tourism Action Day meeting.
  - Following New York State Thruway information centers are proposed to be closed: Beekmantown, Binghamton, and Adirondack Park.
- **Cultural Tourism Conference:** A cultural tourism conference is being planned for April to build business and connect tourism to the arts.
- **Metro North:** Working with Metro North to develop packages for farm fresh.
- **Northern Dutchess Alliance 2010 Charting Our Course Award:** Tourism received this Citation from New York State Assemblyman Marc Molinaro for "Dutchess County Tourism, the officially designated destination marketing organization for Dutchess County, bringing tourism dollars to area businesses by marketing and promoting the assets of Dutchess County to the nation and the world; having built on a solid track record since its inception in 1984 of representing, promoting and marketing Dutchess County."

**Staff Report - DCT Staff***Lydia Higginson, Deputy Director*

- Working on grants to secure funding for farm fresh and other projects..

*Nancy Lutz, Communications Manager*

- Hosted 50 fam tours in 2009.
- Updated calendar events on Dutchesstourism.com website as well as TravelHudsonValley.org site.
- Completed 2010 travel guide listings and submitted to Chronogram. Looking for new images, please see Nancy ([nancy@dutchesstourism.com](mailto:nancy@dutchesstourism.com)) if you have any to submit.
- The Walkway now has LED lights installed and will be testing them soon.

*Dawn Hopper, Tour and Travel Marketing Manager*

- Attended ABA (American Bus Association) Marketplace recently, over 1,000 tour operators attended. Held 58 appointments and handed out our Profile sheets outlining what Dutchess County has to offer. Also met with other DMO's to gather tourism promotion ideas.
- Packages on "JustSayGo" page on website are a good source for getaways for visitors. Also GetawayNewYork.com. Encourage more packaging between attractions and lodgings. Bob Grems invited everyone to contact him to package with Dutchess County Fairgrounds.

*Fred Lauricella, E-Tourism Information Services Manager*

- Website Statistics – Reported on website statistics:

<u>Site Stats:</u>	<u>Nov.</u>	<u>Dec.</u>	<u>Total 2009</u>
Visitors to site	26,192	26,509	532,462
2007 Travel Guide:			
PDF downloads:	59	46	1,305
Events Calendar downloads	217	125	2,773

Farm fresh and Dutchess400 websites will be merged with DutchessTourism.com site..

Twitter subscribers is climbing.

**New Business/Comments**

- Mary Kay – Tourism is going green, the calendar of events will no longer be printed but listings will be available on the DutchessTourism.com website.
- Linda Hubbard – Senator Schumer held a press conference in support of securing finding for restoration of Bannerman Castle which has recently suffered damage due to collapsing walls.
- Beth Pagano –Discussed background of Montgomery Place and handed out a "Community Coalition for Montgomery Place" looking for support from EDC and DCT to help maintain Montgomery Place as a public entity. A motion was made by Beth Pagano and seconded by Karen Hansen to support and become a signatory for joining the coalition. Motion passed.
- Mary Kay – Congressman Hinchey is proposing legislature for a study for the Hudson Valley to become a National Historic designation.
- Mary Kay – Hudson Valley Restaurant Week will take place in March 2010 with 25 restaurants participating.
- Mary Kay – solicited comments from the committee on what they see for tourism in 2010: committee members feel people are staying closer to home, looking for something new locally but moderately priced; diversity of the Walkway has pulled in new visitors.

**Closing Remarks**

The next regular meeting of the Tourism Committee is scheduled for **Thursday, March 18, 2010, at 8:30 a.m., in the EDC Conference Room, 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie, New York.**

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.